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BIRDING IN SONOMA AND LAKE COUNTIES

On May 4, 5, and 6, five Audubonites motored from Berkeley to Clear Lake via Cloverdale. This territory, open fields, vineyards, orchards, running streams, bushes and huge and beautiful trees — oaks, elms, maples, laurels, walnuts, madrones and others — is profitable birding land.

The weather was comfortably warm and Spring showed herself in the delicate and beautiful new leaves of the trees and the many and colorful wild flowers that covered the hillsides.

Brewer and red-winged blackbirds and crows were much in evidence. Warbling and Cassin vireos, orange-crowned and summer warblers, robins, Bullock orioles, western tanagers, western wood pewees, and black-headed grosbeaks were in full song and had us craning our necks to find them in the thick foliage.

House finches, green-backed goldfinches, western kingbirds and meadow-larks sang as they flew from roadside wires and fence posts, where also were seen shrikes and sparrow hawks. Turkey vultures circled high overhead. Barn, cliff, and violet-green swallows cavorted in the air, feeding on millions of tiny gnats. Common and green-backed goldfinches swung on the long slender stalks of the yellow fiddleneck, feasting on the ripe seeds. Twice the bird-watchers called and whistled back to long-tailed chats, plainly heard but screened from view in the huge trees.

In a large puddle, formed by overflow water from a leaking water main at Lucerne, a fluttering flock of cliff swallows gathered mud. The nests were being built under the eaves of an old wooden structure on the lake shore. How each bird knew its own site was a mystery!

Other land birds observed were California quail, Mourning dove, Anna hummer, red-shafted flicker, Calif. woodpecker, black phoebe, California jay, plain titmouse, white-breasted nuthatch, spotted and brown towhees, lark, chipping and song sparrows and a pair of house-wrens nesting under the eaves of our cabin. On the water and on the beaches were western grebes, a white pelican, an Anthony-green heron, coots, a killdeer with two young, a least sandpiper and a spotted sandpiper sunning himself on a rock. It was difficult to identify him, until he stood up and bobbed.

We were told that a water ouzel's nest was on Sulphur creek near Cloverdale but we were unable to find it.

On a trip over this same territory in September 1948, western bluebirds,

Audubon warblers, white and golden-crowned sparrows were numerous, but kingbirds, swallows, chats, other warblers, orioles, and grosbeaks were elsewhere, waiting for the Spring, to return to their nesting grounds. This was a most satisfying jaunt.

Clelia A. Paroni, Berkeley, California

JUNE FIELD TRIP

June 12 was such an ideal summer day and so beautiful in and around Ross, Marin County, that we, who were fortunate enough to be present, regretted that more members had not come to enjoy it, and the birding under the leadership of Mr. and Mrs. Kilham.

Bird calls could be heard on every side, but it often required patient watching through binoculars to locate the birds hidden in the heavy foliage. The beautiful song of the Monterey thrush was heard but the bird was not seen.

Starting across the bridge we searched the bushes beside the stream, loitered along a by way or two, then turned left at the church on to a shady road bordered with attractive homes and gardens, and which led to tree-covered slopes. We banded up Lagunitas Road to the picnic grounds, where juncos were on hand to pick up crumbs.

Most of the group walked around Phoenix Lake to the junction of the Fish and Eldridge grades, where four brown creepers and a female chickadee, feeding two young were seen. A few continued up to Lake Lagunitas.

We noted the attempted conservation of telephone poles. Beside each regular hardwood pole, one of soft wood has been erected, hoping that the woodpeckers would take the broad hint. (This has proven successful in many places. —Ed.)

The following 35 birds were seen or heard:

Vulture, Turkey	Jay, California	Vireo, Hutton
Hawk, Red-tailed	Crow	Cassin, Western
Quail, California	Chickadee, Chestnut -	Warbling
Hummingbird, Anna Allen	backed	Warbler, Lutescent
Flicker, Red-shafted	Titmouse, plain	Blackbird, Brewer
Woodpecker, California	Bush-Tit	Grosbeak, Black-headed
Flycatcher, Ash-thr. Western	Creeper, California	Finch, Cal. Purple
Swallow, Violet-green cliff	Wren-Tit	House
Jay, Steller (crested)	Robin	Towhee, Spotted
	Thrush, Monterey Hermit	Brown
	Russet-backed	Junco, Oregon
		Sparrow, Song

Seventeen members and one guest were present.

— Florence B. Stanton, *Historian*

A RAVENOUS SPARROW HAWK

A prolonged cold spell was experienced throughout California along with the other western states this winter of 1948-1949. Below freezing was frequent and almost continuous for a month. Certain types of food were scarce and some flocks of birds showed ravenous hunger and consequently were unusually bold or reckless. This probably accounts for the following incident.

While baiting my bird-banding traps on February 11, 1949, I heard a robin screaming in my neighbor's yard and other robins scolding vociferously. I hurried to the spot and found a Sparrow hawk (*Falco sparverius sparverius*) alongside a robin on the ground. The hawk flew at my approach and I picked up the robin and found the entire left side of its head severely lacerated and bleeding. It died within a minute as I held it. The hawk circled about, and I left the robin on a rack near where it had been killed. The hawk flew down as I left, picked up the robin and flew away with it without much apparent effort. This is the first time I have observed this species of falcon capture prey of nearly equal size.

Emeron A. Stoner, Benicia, California

In *The Gull*, March, 1928, Mr. Joseph Mailliard tells of a sparrow hawk attempting to carry off a dead quail. The robin referred to above was probably a weakened individual unable to escape.

Quotes from "The Hawks of North America," by John Richard May. "The name, Sparrow hawk, is an unfortunate one, for birds form but a very small part of their food. It might be called "Grasshopper hawk" because of its fondness for these enemies of agriculture. It is very largely beneficial in its feeding habits, as it is almost exclusively insectivorous. Like most Raptors it is an opportunist and in cold weather, when insects are dead or dormant, must support life with other kinds of food."

OUR NAME. — At the regular June meeting, Dr. J. Eric Reynolds, in introducing the resolution, recommended by the Board of Directors, to change the present name, ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC, to GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY, said; that great respect was held for the present name and for the many accomplishments made under it in the last thirty years; that our concept of the Pacific has in the last few years so broadened as to include the hundreds of islands even to New Zealand and the Aleutians; that it seemed desirable to adopt a name that describes us more accurately geographically. The members present were counted. There being a quorum, a ballot was taken—68 approved, 3 opposed.

OUR SEAL. — We are greatly indebted to our artist member Harry Curioux Adamson for the new drawing of our seal with the necessary new lettering. In this seal the background of the gull has always been the Golden Gate, which must have been in the minds of the originators as the geographical location of the association, and now appropriately blends into the new name.

Our new seal will appear on the next issue.

OBSERVATIONS

Edited by Junea W. Kelly

Rufous-crowned sparrow, June 4, Mt. Diablo, Mrs. Vee Curtis.

6 Cedar waxwings, May 26; 1 ruby-crowned kinglet, May 23, Berkeley, Clelia A. Paroni.

A large number of shearwaters, June 6, off shore south of Cliff House, Mrs. Myra Browne.

Western kingbird, University of San Francisco campus, San Francisco, May 7, Peter Grimes.

2 Ruddy turnstones, June 10, Bay Farm Island, Junea W. Kelly.

JULY MEETING

The 382nd meeting of the Golden Gate Audubon Society will be held on July 14 at 7:30 p.m. in the Assembly Hall of the San Francisco Public Library, Larkin and McAllister Sts.

After the business meeting, the evening will be devoted to field notes by members. This is always a stimulating and worthwhile evening. Come prepared to share your interesting bird experiences with other enthusiasts. Guests are welcome. There will be a no-host dinner at the Hotel Whitcomb at 6 p.m.

Laurel Reynolds, *Program Chairman*

JULY FIELD TRIP.—The July

field trip will be held Sunday, July 17th. Since last year's trip was so successful, the party will again meet at Point Lobos Ave. and Camino del Mar, San Francisco at 7:00 A.M. The early birder gets the bird.

The territory to be explored will be the Veterans Facility near Fort Miley, Lincoln Park, Land's End, Sutro Heights, and the Seal Rocks. Leader, Arthur H. Myer. Bring your friends and binoculars.

SPECIAL FIELD TRIP.—On

Saturday, July 30th to the University of California campus in Berkeley. Meet at the west entrance to the campus, at University Ave., at 8:30 a.m. From San Francisco take 7:47 a.m. "F" train to University Ave. Walk east one block to meeting place.

The main campus will be covered before lunch. If birding is desired in Strawberry Canyon, Botanical Gardens or hills back of campus bring lunch, binoculars and interested friends.

Arthur J. Bennett, *Chairman,
Field Trip Committee*

Melville V. Wolff

died May 11, 1949

We extend our sympathy to his family

Golden Gate Audubon Society

formerly

Audubon Association of the Pacific

Organized January 25, 1917

For the Study and the Protection of Birds

Branch of National Audubon Society

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Monthly meetings second Thursday, 7:30 p. m.